

**COLESYSTEMS**

January 28, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft,

Business Applications

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Networking Technologies

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Software Development

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Web Commerce

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Training

I have always believed that it was a bit overzealous for our government to have actually reacted with a federal lawsuit against Microsoft simply because a few of Microsoft's competitors had suggested it. I agree that Microsoft may well have employed aggressive marketing and sales tactics, but these tactics had never risen to the level of needing federal court intervention. I worry more about any business that doesn't aggressively pursue sales.

The IT business, by its very nature, is a very fluid business. Where one particular company may be dominant today, another will be tomorrow. It is incumbent upon all who hope to survive in the IT world to change with the current times and technologies. Any company that does not -- even a company with the apparent invulnerability of Microsoft -- will soon find itself relegated to yesterday's outmoded ideas. By the very nature of the IT business, therefore, Microsoft would have had to change to remain competitive. The limitations on Microsoft brought on by the settlement, such as disclosure about internal interfaces of Windows, will only make trade secrets public, and prepare IT engineers for the "next big thing."

The irony here is that this lawsuit, and the subsequent settlement, only delayed what would have had to happen on its own anyway. I am hopeful that this marks the end of any federal action against Microsoft, or any other IT business.

Sincerely,

Ivan Cole
Chief Technology Officer

cc: Representative Jerrold Nadler

174 Hudson Street

New York, NY 10013

Phone: (212) 965 6400

Fax: (212) 965 6401

Toll Free: 888-COLESYS

Web: <http://www.colesys.com>

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